

PG:79-28
Buck House
(Buck-Wardrop House, Darnall's Chance)
14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro
County

c. 1742; Mid 19th century; 1986
Architect: James T. Wollon, 1986

The Buck House, or Buck-Wardrop House, has undergone two major renovations in its history, having begun as a c. 1742 1 1/2-story Flemish bond brick house. In the mid 19th century, it was two stories in height, of stuccoed brick, with Italianate and Greek Revival stylistic elements. The walls had been extended to two stories, and stucco applied to hide the change in brick bond from Flemish to common bond. The front entrance bay was covered by a flat-roofed Doric porch, and the roofline above this bay also formed a pediment. The first floor windows were 9/6 sash, while the second floor held 6/6. The first-story windows extended to the first floor line, those flanking the porch opening into small wrought and cast iron balconies. Many of the windows had louvered shutters. The building had a hip roof with Italianate brackets. The east and west slopes held long gable-roofed dormer windows. Four chimneys pierced the interior of the roof near the ridgeline. A two-story wing was attached to the house on the east end. In 1986, the entire second floor and roof were removed, and the house was reconstructed to a more 18th century appearance. The end chimneys, which had been removed to the cellar level in the 19th century, are reconstructions. The shape of the roof is conjectural. Evidence of a gambrel roof had existed, but the upper portions were missing. Either the house had a hip-on-gambrel roof originally, or the upper portion of the gambrel was removed when the house was heightened. Window sills, which had been dropped to the level of

the floor in the 19th century, were raised, and the 19th century east wing was removed in its entirety. As it now stands, the Buck House is a 1 1/2-story brick house with a hip-on-gambrel roof. Walls are laid in Flemish bond with queen closers at corners and masonry openings, and tooled joints. The foundation is English bond with a beveled water table surrounds the building, and is pierced by four elliptical arched cellar windows on the principal (south) facade. The center bay of this facade projects slightly, and is surmounted by a pediment with a small round window filled with leaded diamond-pane glass. This center bay contains the principal entrance flanked by 24-light casement windows set in segmental-arched openings with splayed jack arches. The entrance door is set in an arched opening containing a transom of wooden panels above the 8-panel door. The remaining bays on this facade contain leaded four-part windows that include paired 18-light casements below paired 9-light transoms of rectangular panes. The north facade is six bays long, with an entrance in the third bay from the east, consisting of a paneled door with a rectangular wood paneled transom. All six openings have the same tall brick arches as on the south windows, and the windows are the same four-part casements. Two flush chimneys rise from each end of the building. Between these, the wall is pierced by a single window on each floor. These casement windows with leaded diamond-shaped glass panes are surmounted by segmental brick arches. A three-brick string course divides the floors at the level of the gambrel eaves. Hip-roofed dormer windows are symmetrically arranged on the north and south elevations; these are fitted with pairs of leaded diamond-pane casement windows. Four pierce the south slope,

on either side of the pediment, and five are evenly spaced on the north slope. Both the gambrel and hip slopes of the roof are covered with wood shingles. A small octagonal spire with an octagonal roof surmounted by a weathervane crests the center of the roof ridge.

The property on which the Buck House stands has strong potential as an important archeological site. A 1761 inventory, a 1765 deed, and a 1787 newspaper advertisement describe many outbuildings on the property, none of which have survived. In its original form, the Buck House (named for a late owner, Harry Buck, Sr.) was one of the earliest mansion houses in 18th century Maryland. The first owner of the house was James Wardrop, a prominent Upper Marlboro merchant originally from Scotland. When Wardrop purchased the property in 1741, a house stood on the property. However, it is uncertain whether this house was replaced. Certainly the house was in its original form by 1753, as a 1760 inventory has been located describing the property. The major alterations to the property were probably carried out under the ownership of Edward Grafton W. Hall, who owned it between 1857 and 1887.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITES SUMMARY SHEET

P.G. County Survey # 79-28 Date c.1750, 1858

Building Name Buck House

Location North Side of Main Street, Upper Marlboro, Md.

Open to Public X yes no Restricted

The BUCK HOUSE is a two-storey stuccoed brick house five bays wide which appears to date from the mid-19th century. However, the house is actually a reconstruction of a mid-18th century house. Much of the earlier house remains on the first floor and the outline of the previous gambrel roof may be seen on the end walls. The present house is Italianate in style, with Greek Revival details. The Buck House may well be the single most important historic structure left standing in Upper Marlboro. Research has proven this house was erected before 1753, making it the oldest brick building in town. The first known owner of the Buck House was James Wardrop, a prominent Upper Marlboro merchant (originally from Scotland) who purchased the land from Daniel Carroll in 1741. Included among its later owners were at least four other merchants: John Hodges of Thomas, Horatio C. Scott, Edward Grafton W. Hall, and Harry Buck.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

James Wardrop House

AND/OR COMMON

Buck House (Darnall's Chance)

2 LOCATION

(Now on Governor Oden Bowie Drive)

STREET & NUMBER North side of Main Street, about 1,000 feet from the
street, just east of Schoolhouse Pond

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Upper Marlboro

VICINITY OF

Fifth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

CODE

24

COUNTY

Prince George's

CODE

033

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE☐ OCCUPIED
☒ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSEUM
☐ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☒ OTHER: to be☐ STRUCTURE☐ BOTH☐ ACCESSIBLE☐ SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ OBJECT☐ IN PROCESS☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ BEING CONSIDERED☐ NO**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

restored

NAME

Mr. W. C. Dutton, jr.

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

STREET & NUMBER

6600 Kenilworth Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Riverdale

VICINITY OF

STATE
Maryland 20840**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Prince George's County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Upper Marlboro

STATE
Maryland**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1939

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE
D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Buck-Wardrop House is a two-story stuccoed brick house five bays in length, facing south; extending from its east end is a slightly lower two-story stuccoed brick service wing two bays in length. Appearing to date from the mid-19th century, the house is virtually a mid-19th century reconstruction within and above four one-story brick walls which, together with the cellar, remained from a mid-18th century house, apparently with a gambrel roof. Today the house is unoccupied, boarded up, deteriorated, becoming ruinous.

The main house measures approximately 34' by 56 1/2'; the wing approximately 18' by 25'.

In style, the mid-19th century house is Italianate, although certain details are of the Greek Revival style.

The buff stucco which covers the brick walls is scored in imitation of ashlar; the joints were painted gray and the stucco fields may have been painted a purplish-brown in imitation of brownstone. All stucco was whitewashed frequently, obliterating much of the scoring and most of the original coloring.

A watertable of undetermined profile delineates the top of the foundation.

The principal entrance is centered in the south front, sheltered by a three-bay, one-story porch of the Greek Doric order, its full entablature masking a nearly flat roof; the four columns are fluted and the two pilasters against the wall are plain. Wide plain pilasters, scored to suggest pairs of pilasters, flank the entrance feature and support an architrave and frieze which extends around the porch ceiling. The double doors are glazed "French doors" dating from the second quarter of the 20th century. The sidelights and transoms are glazed with glass frosted in a grapevine motif. The transom bar is dented.

Windows, generally, are 9/6 in the first story, 6/6 in the second. First story windows extend to the first floor line, those flanking the porch opening into small wrought and cast iron balconies. Louvered blinds flank the windows, those of the first story having a panel in the lower area.

Above the double central window of the second story is a pediment supported on scrolled brackets.

The low hipped roof is covered with standing-seam tin. The wide cornice with concealed gutter is supported by paired scrolled brackets at the corners and above each masonry pier between openings. In

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

height they coincide with the height of a wide plain wooden frieze. A single dormer is in the east and west slopes. Four brick chimneys rise above the roof, flanking the central bay.

The roof cornice turns upward above the center bay of the south facade to form a pediment. Pairs of brackets support the cornice flanking the pediment and a pair flanks the peak.

A frame semi-octagonal bay window, one story in height, projects from the center of the west end and a pair of closely spaced windows are above it in the second story. The three windows of the bay are 6/6, their overall height matching other typical 9/6 first story windows.

The north facade is generally plainer than the south. A small, plain porch, one bay in width, with a hipped roof, shelters the door in the central bay. Square wooden columns have simple jig-sawn brackets. Windows are of typical height and design, with typical blinds; none have balconies.

The east wing is similar but much simpler. The cornices have no brackets; all windows are 6/6; a single chimney rises through the middle of the roof; a simple hipped roof porch, one story in height, extends across part of its north facade, sheltering a door.

Within the main house, with its ceiling height of twelve feet, a wide central hall extends through the middle bay; at its north end the principal staircase rises to the second floor in a continuous semi-circular curve, the plastered walls being furred to follow that shape. The molded walnut hand rail is supported by a very massive round walnut newel at the bottom and two turned walnut balusters at each end. Step ends and the second floor fascia are ornamented by an applied jig-sawn scroll. Large holes on top of the newel indicate that it was once topped with something, possibly a piece of sculpture and possibly one including a lamp. Space beneath the staircase is open.

A molded plaster cornice surrounds the hall ceiling and a richly-molded floral medallion surrounds a former chandelier location. A high wooden baseboard with molded cap and a heavy architrave with bold

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

backband surrounding the doors complete the decoration of the hall.

Typical doors throughout the main house have six partially raised panels with loose cyma-reversa moldings: two small panels are immediately above the wide lock rail, with two taller ones above and below. Throughout the house, mortised locks are signed CLARK BALTO, a manufacturer who traded from 1842 to at least 1870.

A pair of parlors is west of the hall, divided by two Corinthian columns supporting a beam entablature. The plaster cornice at the ceiling of each parlor is pierced with a foliated vine motif. Most of the plaster foliage from the column capitals is missing. The bay window in the west end is centered on the colonnade screen; the wall opening into the bay is supported by foliated plaster brackets. Chimneys in the two spaces rise against the hall partition; the south fireplace is in ruins, its mantel missing but most of the black marble north mantel is in place, its semi-elliptical arch designed to receive a Latrobe stove, now missing. On the ceiling of the north parlor is a chandelier medallion consisting of alternating petals of grapevine and acanthus leaf motif. A similar medallion was in the south parlor, now missing.

Windows extend to the floor; fitted into their splayed jambs are folding shutters, the exposed leaf of which, when closed, is paneled; other leaves are fitted with movable louvers. A wide two-plain architrave with a bold applied backband surrounds the window, matching those elements of the doors. A high baseboard with a molded cap is at the base of the plain plastered walls which are furred out about six inches from the masonry to accommodate the interior shutters.

A semi-elliptical arch connects the two spaces east of the hall, the southerly space being larger than the northerly. The arch, doors and windows are trimmed like their counterparts previously described and the doors and windows are, likewise, similar. Chimneys rise against the hall partition, like their counterparts to the west. Fragments of a pilastered mantel of black marble remain in the southerly room but the mantel of the northerly room is missing. The easterly rooms have no cornice or ceiling medallions. A glazed chain closet built into the alcove north of the north chimney is of the 20th century.

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

The second story plan is similar to the first but the space above the front hall is partitioned into two small rooms, the modern dividing partition being at the mullion of the double window. The four principal rooms of this story are separated by partitions. Finishes are similar to those below but much simpler and plainer. Four wooden pilasters mantels remain at the fireplaces. Windows have no shutters. An extremely steep enclosed stair rises north of the northeast chimney (from the northeast room) to the attic, a single space with little head-room, walls and ceilings finished with plaster. Second story ceiling height is about 10 feet.

Spaces in the east wing are very plain and simple. A partition at the centered chimney divides the wing into two principal spaces; the westerly space is further subdivided into a narrow passage with enclosed service stairs along the north wall, and a small room south of the passage. Windows and the unmolded four-panel doors are surrounded by plain beaded architraves. There are no fireplaces.

The cellar is beneath the main house only. It is accessible by the service stair in the wing which descends to the east wall of the cellar. Foundation walls are of brick and brick partitions are beneath all the principal partitions above, dividing the cellar into a central hall and four rooms. Most of these walls date from the mid-18th century, the major mid-19th century cellar change being the addition of chimney foundations flanking the central hall. The northeast chimney appears to accommodate a large fireplace, now obscured by a boiler and its appurtenances. The two easterly rooms have plaster ceilings on circular-sawn lathe, now much decayed. Many pieces of brass hardware from a mid-19th century pull-bell system remain on the ceiling and some pulls remain on the sides of chimney breasts above. Brackets for former bells remain in the northeast room of the cellar. The cellar is more fully described in "The Mid-18th Century House" below.

The advance state of decay exposes much evidence of the earlier house. No reason is apparent for the dramatic rebuilding, other than a conjectured desire to restyle the house.

Areas of stucco are off all facades, both stories. The foundation is of English bond. A watertable is of indeterminable profile, probably an unmolded ledge. First story walls are of typically large bricks laid in Flemish bond with queen closers at corners and masonry openings,

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

and grapevine joists. They are heavily covered with a cream wash, apparently before the stucco. Second story walls are of smaller bricks laid in common bond, unpainted. The second story walls are laid directly on a wooden member which appears to be the top wall plate of the original construction.

Segmental arches support the brick masonry above the first story windows; the tops of the voussoir bricks are ground to coincide with a horizontal course, slightly higher than one bricklength above the crown of the arch.

The southeast and southwest corners of the house were embellished with brick quoins, apparently on the south facade only. Each quoin was three courses in height. The longer quoin exposure was two full bricks in length, the shorter exposure one. Queen closers were used to work the pattern in full stretchers and full headers. Before the stucco was applied, and after the cream wash was applied, the quoins were chipped off to make a smooth wall surface. The quoins are comparable to those of St. Andrew's Church near Leonardtown, Maryland, designed by Richard Boulton, 1746.

Beneath the south front porch the brickwork of the middle bay projects about 4 1/2"; the width of this projection is about 14 1/2'. Not apparent above the porch, the projecting brickwork was chipped away, like the quoins at the corners, to provide a smooth surface, a procedure apparent where the stucco is missing.

The cream wash defines the height of the original eave-cornice and some wooden blocks remain in the wall, installed originally as nailing blocks.

The outline of the gambrel roof's lower slope is visible, because of missing stucco, on the east end of the house at the northeast corner. The width of the former barge board is outlined by the cream wash. The same approximate pitch is suggested by a slight difference in the stucco's color at the southeast corner. East end wall brickwork visible from the attic of the wing appears to be of the mid-19th century; the upper portions of the original gable may have been removed when the house was heightened or the upper slopes of the roof

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

may have been hipped; both forms are typical and either may be expected.

Patches of stucco are missing at most windows; apparently they are in their original locations and are of their original widths, although all have had their sills dropped to the floor. The north door appears to have been slightly east of its existing centered location, probably due to the location of the original staircase within. Beneath the north door was an arched doorway to the cellar, now filled with brick masonry.

The east wing appears to date from the mid-19th century in its entirety.

Internally, nothing of the original house is visible above the cellar. In two or three small holes through the furred mid-19th century plaster and lathe, earlier plaster is seen laid directly on the brick walls; the outline of a chair rail is apparent and vertical voids in the plaster suggest wooden pilasters flanking the windows.

The original chimneys are removed in their entireties, above the cellar. Missing plaster at the former northeast chimney, second story, indicates its former existence by the presence of broken bricks projecting from the wall, and soot-blackened bricks. The same gambrel shape is in evidence, as is what appears to be the original ceiling line, approximately 7' above the floor, believed to be at its original elevation.

In the cellar brick walls are beneath the partitions above, resulting in a central hall with two rooms on either side. The former north door from the cellar hall, described above, is visible. Although much decayed, the hall floor of the cellar appears to have been paved in flagstone; the southwest floor is paved in brick. The easterly rooms have wood floors. The floor level of the northwest cellar room is several feet below the floors elsewhere and this entire space is covered by a single, simple barrel vault of brick. Two shallow arches at its west end supported the hearth above.

Similar arches remain beneath the former southwest and southeast fireplaces, although the latter is nearly covered by mid-19th century lathe and plaster. The northeast chimney foundations appears to have been removed in its entirety; an exterior cellar entrance is there

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

and much of the brickwork above appears to have been reconstructed in the mid-19th century or later.

Most, if not all, of the first floor joists appear to be the originals, dating from the mid-18th century. Floorboards appear to date from the mid-19th century. Second floor joists are not visible to determine their age.

The low hilltop site is relatively level with a steep fall along its westerly edge down to the water or millpond. Northwest of the house is an intermediate terrace of irregular shape, some feet below the elevation of the lawn. North of the house, parallel to it, appears to be a series of two or possibly three very shallow falls, now barely perceptible; several hundred feet north of the house, at the edge of the cleared area, is a larger fall, thence impenetrable underbrush. The possibility of these falls is mentioned because the feature is so characteristic of Maryland mansion landscaping in the 18th century.

The south lawn appears to be void of falls; a driveway may have made a "teardrop" shaped loop centered on the house, circling beneath specimen evergreen trees, 19th century landscaping features.

Several small barns, sheds and other outbuildings, much decayed and much altered remain from periods following the two which saw so much careful design and construction at this site.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE merchants	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		local history	

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Buck House, probably the single most important historic structure left standing in Upper Marlboro, county seat of Prince George's, is the oldest example of brick architecture still remaining in the town. While its present appearance suggests that the building was constructed between 1855 and 1875, recent historical and architectural research has revealed a construction date before 1753. In its original form the Buck House (named for its last private owner, Harry Buck, Sr.) was one of the earliest mansion houses in 18th century Maryland. The following excerpt from the August 2, 1787 Maryland Gazette describes the property:

The improvements are very good, and perhaps constructed on as convenient a plan as any building in the state-The dwelling house is of brick, 55 front and 35 feet wide, with a passage of 15 feet, four rooms on the first floor, with fire places in each, and a number of conveniences-Four rooms above, a passage and several very conveneient closets-a kitchen under the dwelling-house, with a large cellar, vault, and other conveniences; a wash house 16 feet by 14-a dry-well, 40 feet deep;-a milk house 12 feet square; an office or study 17 feet by 14, all brick and well finished; a well built wood stable and carriage house, 30 feet by 18, with several other very necessary out-houses;-a garden and yards well enclosed, and a very good well of water;-a small orchard of apple trees, and a variety of other fruit trees.

The Buck House today is exemplary of the period of its 19th century alterations. Possible restoration plans are, however, to return the structure to its 18th century appearance. Evidence of enough features of that time remains for this to be done with accuracy, including the following interesting ones. Quoins were rarely found on 18th century Maryland structures. Known examples are All Hallows' Church, Anne Arundel (circa 1729); the Dulaney House, Annapolis, now destroyed (circa 1730); St. Thomas Manor, Charles County (1741); Bladen's Folly, now McDowell Hall, St. John's College, Annapolis (1743); and St. Andrew's Church, Leonardtown (1746); all built during the same time as the Buck House. The latter is, the only one-story house in Maryland to have quoins. The projecting central bay here is also unique on a one-story 18th century Maryland, and possibly American, house. The gambrel roof previously on the Buck House is

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SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

found on other early to mid-18th century Maryland Houses large for their day, including Doughregan Manor, Howard; the James Brice House, Annapolis; Snow Hill, Prince George's; Mount Pleasant, Prince George's; Birmingham Manor, Anne Arundel; and Newtown Manor and The Plains, St. Mary's.

The first known owner of the Buck House was James Wardrop, a prominent Upper Marlboro merchant (originally from Scotland) who purchased 4 3/4 acres of ground from Daniel Carroll of Upper Marlboro in 1741. The 1741 deed describes the acreage in terms which indicate that a dwelling house was already on the property, thus suggesting that the Buck House in its original form was already in existence by 1741. This is not yet certain, as the house indirectly referred to may have been an earlier dwelling. It is certain, however, that the Buck House was in existence in its original form by 1753, as a 1760 inventory has been located describing the furnishings in each room of the house when James Wardrop died. The inventory even lists the contents of Wardrop's brick vaulted wine cellar which can still be seen in the basement of the Buck House. The value of the total inventory, including slaves, goods in the store and materials in the outbuildings, came to about \$1,000. This large an inventory was limited to less than two per cent of the population through at least 1760. This placed Wardrop among the wealthiest men in the colony, well able to afford a dwelling as large and well-appointed as the 18th century Buck House.

Following the death of merchant Wardrop, the Buck House property changed hands numerous times. Included among its later owners were at least four other prominent Upper Marlboro merchants: John Hodges of Thomas (1799-1825), Horatio C. Scott (circa 1832-1857), Edward Grafton W. Hall (1857-1887) and Harry Buck (1907-1974). Such frequent ownership by merchants, usually the wealthiest in 18th and 19th century communities, is a testimony to the size and quality of the Buck House. The prominence of its owners may also explain why such drastic alterations were carried out in the 19th century to make the house as up-to-date as possible.

The alterations to the house were probably carried out under the ownership of Edward Grafton W. Hall who owned it between 1857 and 1887. Horatio C. Scott, the previous owner, was Hall's father-in-law. He owned the building from 1832 to 1857. The alterations are thought to date from 1855 to 1870, suggesting Hall as the instigator.

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Prince George's County
Maryland

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SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The property on which the Buck House stands has strong potential as a very important archeological site. A 1761 inventory, a 1765 deed and 1787 newspaper advertisement describe many outbuildings on the property, none of which have survived. Among these were a wash house, milk house, brick office, wood stable and carriage house, meat house, hen house and rabbit house. Records of the same period indicate that the property once had a formal garden, and a 1788 deed mentions a family burial vault not far from the house.

The fact that the Buck House in its original form was one of the most prestigious houses in 18th century Maryland, coupled with the distinct possibility that it was constructed before 1741, when Daniel Carroll owned the property, raises some very interesting and controversial questions. Could the Buck House have been the original home of Daniel Carroll, the father of Bishop John Carroll and Daniel Carroll of Rock Creek, and could it also have been the birthplace of the famous Carroll brothers, rather than the unpretentious frame house which once stood on the present courthouse property? A number of factors suggest that the answers to both questions may be yes.

Daniel Carroll of Upper Marlborough was an extremely wealthy man, one who would have been expected to build a large formal brick mansion such as the Buck House would have been in the 18th century.

The 4 3/4-acre parcel which Wardrop purchased from Carroll in 1741 already had a dwelling on it.

The frame house which stood on the present courthouse property until the 1880's, and which has traditionally been referred to as the birthplace of the Carroll brothers, appears to have been built, on the basis of its style, between 1790 and 1820.

It has traditionally been said that John Carroll and his brother Daniel of Rock Creek were born near the courthouse. When did this statement originate? If before 1880, then it refers not to the present courthouse site but rather to the site of the two previous courthouses which stood on the western end of the island formed by present-day Main and Pratt Streets.

see continuation sheet #9

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

Buck House
Prince George's County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 9

SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The Buck House property was always referred to in 18th and 19th century deeds as being near the courthouse, meaning near either the first or second Upper Marlboro courthouses and not the present one.

Both John Carroll and his brother, Daniel Carroll of Rock Creek, were born before their father sold the 4 3/4 acres of ground with a dwelling house to James Wardrop in 1741. Daniel was born in 1730 and John in 1735.

Aubrey C. Land, "Planters of Colonial Maryland," Maryland Historical Magazine, 67 (Spring, 1972), p. 116.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Buck House
Prince George's County
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 10

Patents, Liber B. No. 23, folio 133-134,
Patents, Liber P.L. No 5, folio,
P.G.Co. Land Records, Liber M, folios 181-183,
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber No. Y, folio 398,
Maryland Gazette, March 19, 1752, page 3, col. 2 (M 1279).
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber No. NN, folios 122-123,
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber No. NN, folios 123-124,
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber No. NN, folio 424-425,
Wills, Liber No. 31, folios 1123-1125,
P.G. Co. Inventories - Liber No. 72, folios 34-49,
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber No. T.T., folios 422-424,
Wills, Liber No. 36, folios 496-499,
P.G. Co. Inventory Box 22, folder 14.
Maryland Gazette, Aug. 2, 1787.
Maryland Gazette, Nov. 20, 1788.
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber HH No. 2, folios 187-192,
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber H.H. No. 2, folios 196-199,
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber H.H. No 2, folios 280-284,
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1796 (10956),
P.G. Co. Personal Assessment for 1796 (10956),
P.G. Co. Land Records, Liber JRM No. 5, folios 322-324,

See Continuation Sheet 11

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

Buck House
Prince George's County
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 11

P.G. Co. Marriage License Record 1797-1817, P.6,
P.G. Co. Land Records Liber JRM No. 7, folios 179-181,
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1800 (10957),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1801 (10959),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1802 (10960),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1803 (10961),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1804 (10962),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1806 (10963),
P.G. Co. Wills, Liber T No. 1, folios 636-637,
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1807 (10965),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1808 (10967),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1809 (10969),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1814 (10985),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1819 (10995),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1824 (11004),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1825 (11005),
P.G. Co. Marriage License Record 1818-1826, p. 145,
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1827 (11010),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1829 (11014),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1831 (11016),
P.G. Co. Real Property Tax Assessment for 1832 (11019),

See Continuation Sheet 12

PG:79-28

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM REFERENCES

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

ORGANIZATION

DATE _____

TELEPHONE 879-6748

(301) 868-1121

STATE 21078

Clinton

Maryland 20735

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____

STATE _____

LOCAL _____

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE _____

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE _____

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

THE ONCE AND FUTURE WARDROP- BUCK HOUSE

PG: 79-28

by John Walton, jr. and Susan Pearlpart one

At virtually the eleventh hour, restoration work has begun on one of Prince George's County's architectural and historical treasures. The Wardrop House or Buck House (as it is more commonly known) is certainly the most important historic building which still survives in the town of Upper Marlboro, the county seat of Prince George's County since 1721. It is known to have been standing by 1748, when its 4 3/4 acre tract of land adjoining the former Prince George's County Courthouse belonged to merchant James Wardrop. However, its exact date of construction remains unknown. It is possible that the building was constructed before 1741, when Wardrop first acquired the property, --perhaps even as early as 1727. If in fact the Buck House was built before 1741, it may well have been the birthplace of two of Prince George's most illustrious citizens: Daniel Carroll, "the Commissioner," a signer of the United States Constitution; and John Carroll, the first Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in America, (both sons of Daniel Carroll the Elder, from whom Wardrop had purchased the 4 3/4 acre tract in 1741).

In any case, by the time of James Wardrop's death in 1760, we are able to document a clear picture of his impressive house: a one and one-half story brick building with a "jerkin head" or hipped gambrell roof, four tall exterior chimney stacks, two at each end of the building, and a principal facade set off by a projecting central bay or "pavillon" and ornamented at each of its two corners with projecting brick quoins. Three of these architectural features- i.e., the hipped gambrel roof, the brick quoins, and the central projecting bay- make the Buck House unique among the surviving architecture of Maryland constructed during the first half of the 18th century.

After Wardrop's death his widow married twice again, and until 1787, the property was held for her two daughters. In that year, a detailed description of the house appeared in a sale notice in the Maryland Gazette: "The improvements are very good and perhaps constructed on as convenient a plan as any building in the state--The dwelling house is of brick, 55 feet front and 35 feet wide, with a passage of 15 feet, four rooms on the first floor, with fireplaces in each, and a number of conveniences--four rooms above, a passage and several very convenient closets-- a kitchen under the dwelling house, with a large cellar, vault and other conveniences...." The property was sold in 1788 and after a few short-term owners was purchased in 1799 by John Hodges of Thomas, an up-and-coming young merchant of Upper Marlboro, thus beginning a quarter-century of Hodges family residence.

John Hodges became a very prominent citizen of Upper Marlboro. He served as a member of the first Board of Trustees of the newly formed Trinity Episcopal Church, and was the owner of a local brick yard, grist mill and granary, and a very successful

Buck House, con't.

PG: 79-28

merchant. After Hodges' death in 1825, the property remained in the hands of his executors until 1833 when an agreement was made to sell it to another merchant, Horatio Scott.

Horatio Scott also was a prominent citizen of Upper Marlboro. He was a member of the Trinity Church Vestry and a trustee of the Marlborough Academy; he also served as a judge of the Orphan's Court of Prince George's County and as a delegate in the Maryland General Assembly. In partnership with his brother Poldore E. Scott, he became a successful merchant. By 1857, however, Scott was in financial difficulties, and at the end of that year he sold his house in Upper Marlboro to Edward G.W. Hall, another merchant. Hall soon married Scott's daughter, and in the months before his marriage to Isabel Scott, Edward Hall undertook a major renovation of the house. The changes which this renovation brought about were so extensive that the new Mrs. Hall probably scarcely recognized her childhood home when she first entered it as a bride. These changes have been well documented not only by architectural and archaeological investigations, but also by Hall's own descriptions as recorded in a court deposition. The walls of the original structure were raised to a full second story allowing for higher second story ceilings and a generous attic space; the end wall chimneys were removed and replaced by new interior stacks; and the two parlors on the first floor were opened into one large formal parlor divided by Corinthian columns and lighted by a semi-hexagonal bay centered in the west wall. A one-story columned porch was added on the south front, and a sizeable two-story wing was constructed on the east end of the house. The entire structure was covered with stucco, thus disguising the changes in the brick work. The result of this renovation, completed in 1858 at the cost of between eight and nine thousand dollars, was a large and imposing Italianate Victorian mansion, which with only minor alterations, is represented by the Buck House as it appears today. (to be continued in the next issue)



An associate membership of the Prince
George's Historical and Cultural Trust

Joyce W. Mc Donald, Chairman
7117 Pony Trail Lane
Hyattsville, Md. 20782



WE'RE
INVOLVED



Mr. Mark Edwards
Deputy SHPO
Maryland Historical Trust
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

1703085604

P.A. # 79-28

NOMINATION FORM
for the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME				
COMMON:				
AND/OR HISTORIC:				
Harry Buck House				
2. LOCATION				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
CITY OR TOWN:				
Upper Marlboro				
STATE:		COUNTY:		
Maryland		Prince George's		
3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
				Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____				
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Religious _____				
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific _____				
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY				
OWNER'S NAME:				
Harry and Sarah Buck				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
(General Delivery)				
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:		
Upper Marlboro		Maryland		
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION				
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:				
Prince George's County Court House				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:		
Upper Marlboro		Maryland		
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #):				
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS				
TITLE OF SURVEY:				
Historic American Building Survey				
DATE OF SURVEY: 1939 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local				
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:				
Library of Congress				
STREET AND NUMBER:				
First St. between East Capitol St. & Constitution Ave., S.E.				
CITY OR TOWN:		STATE:		
Washington		D.C.		

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The house consists of a larger two story north wing and a smaller two story south wing. The larger wing is five bays, with a gable over the center bay and a pedimented double window on the second floor below the gable. The house is stuccoed to the level of the wooden frieze, from which brackets spring supporting the boxed cornice. Except for the pedimented second story window, the window architraves are plastered. The window frames have a narrow bead along the outer edge. The windows themselves are 6/9 double hung sash continuing to the level of the porch floor; ornamental iron balustrades run across the window openings. The windows have exterior shutters consisting of panelled sections below louvered sections; the shutters are mortised and pegged. The interior window jamb treatment consists of interior shutters folding into the splayed jambs; like the exterior shutters, the interior ones have panelled and louvered sections. Across the three middle bays of the first floor is a porch in the Greek Doric order found on houses in Prince George's County. The doorway itself consists of transom lights and side lights flanked by pilasters with a grooved center section. The pilasters support a frieze that breaks out slightly from the wall surface. On the north end, a one story clapboard sheeted semi-octagonal bay has been added.

The lower wing is two bays wide with a porch across the first floor on the back. It has 6/6 windows with exposed wooden sills and beaded board frames. Like the main block, the walls are stuccoed to the level of a wooden frieze, but the boxed cornice is not bracketed.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Phil-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry☐ Philosophy☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☐ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature☐ itation☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The House was once the home of E. G. W. Hall, a wealthy Upper Marlboro merchant. His wife's father, Horatio Scott, had acquired the land from John Hodges.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification:

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:		COUNTY:	
STATE:		COUNTY:	
STATE:		COUNTY:	
STATE:		COUNTY:	

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Christopher Owens, Park Historian	
ORGANIZATION M-NCPPC	DATE April 17, 1973
STREET AND NUMBER: 8787 Georgia Ave.	
CITY OR TOWN: Silver Spring	STATE Maryland

12.

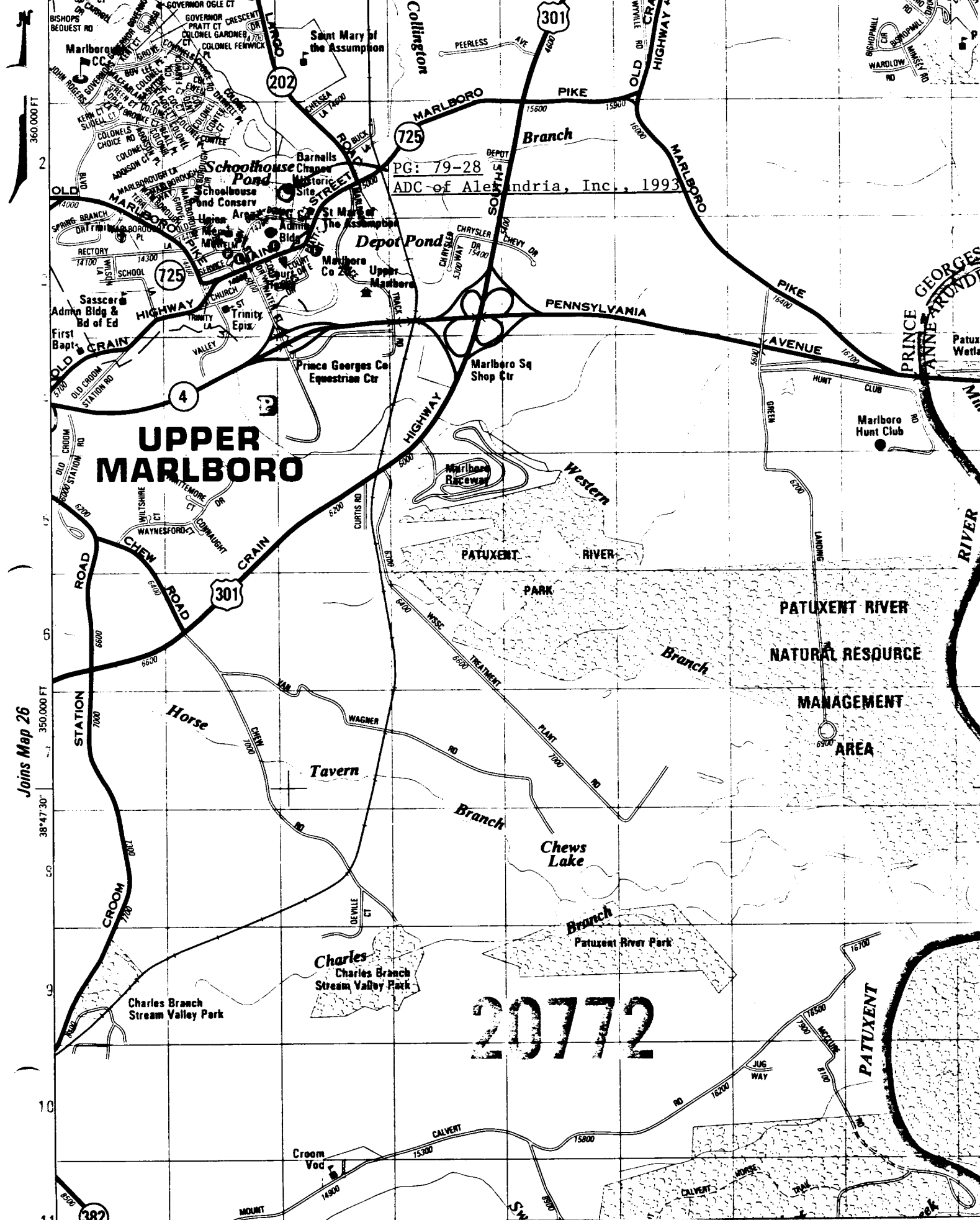
State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

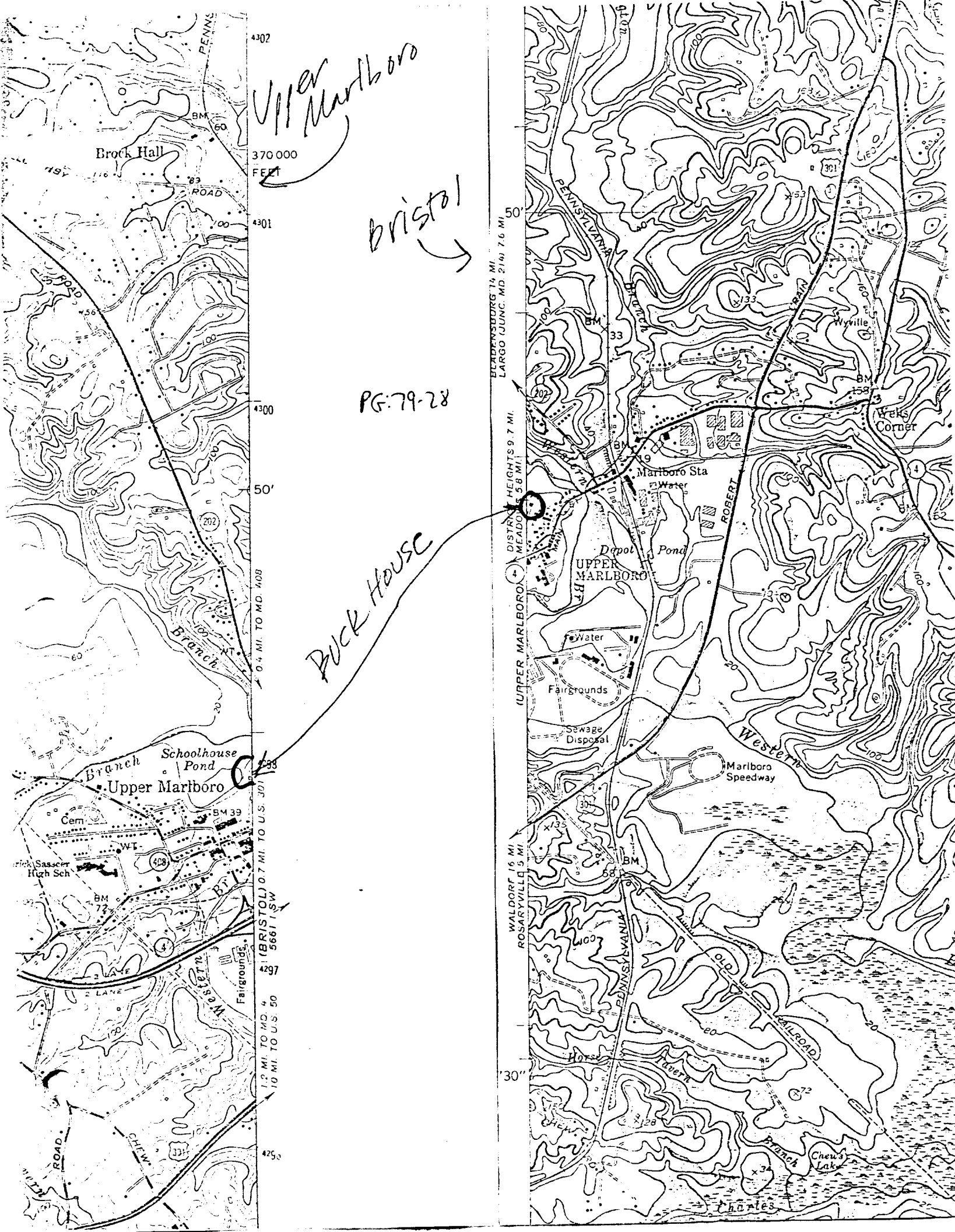
Significance of this property is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Signature

SEE INSTRUCTIONS













DARNALL'S CHANCE

(ALSO KNOWN AS THE BUCK HOUSE)

IN 1741 DANIEL CARROLL OF UPPER MARLBORO SOLD DARNALL'S CHANCE TO JAMES WARDROP, A PROMINENT UPPER MARLBORO MERCHANT, WHO ORIGINALLY CAME FROM SCOTLAND. FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF JAMES WARDROP IN 1760, THE HOUSE AND ADJOINING PROPERTY CHANGED HANDS NUMEROUS TIMES. INCLUDED AMONG THE LATER OWNERS WERE FOUR PROMINENT UPPER MARLBORO MERCHANTS: JOHN NODGES OF THOMAS, HORATIO C. SCOTT, EDWARD GRAFTON W. NALL, AND HARRY BUCK. DARNALL'S CHANCE IS VERY IMPORTANT ARCHITECTUALLY, BEING UNIQUE IN SEVERAL DESIGN ASPECTS AMONG THE SURVIVING COLONIAL BUILDINGS OF MARYLAND. THE QUIDS AND PROJECTING CENTRAL BAY FOUND HERE ARE UNIQUE ON A ONE-STORY 17TH OR 18TH CENTURY MARYLAND HOUSE. IT IS ALSO THE OLDEST BUILDING STILL STANDING IN THE COUNTY SEAT OF UPPER MARLBORO AND PERHAPS IN THE ENTIRE COUNTY. ALTHOUGH DARNALL'S CHANCE WAS DRAMATICALLY REMODELED BETWEEN 1857 AND 1858, RESTORATION TO ITS ORIGINAL APPEARANCE WAS COMPLETED EARLY IN 1988, BY THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION.

DARNALL'S CHANCE

(ALSO KNOWN AS THE BUCK HOUSE)

DARNALL'S CHANCE WAS ORIGINALLY CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN 1694 AND 1713 BY COLONEL HENRY DARNALL, A RELATIVE OF MARYLAND'S PROPRIETARY FAMILY, THE CALVERTS, OR BY HIS SON HENRY DARNALL, II. IN 1727 HENRY DARNALL, II CONVEYED THE PROPERTY TO HIS SON-IN-LAW DANIEL CARROLL OF UPPER MARYLAND WHO MOST PROBABLY MADE IT HIS RESIDENCE. IT IS VERY LIKELY THEN THAT DARNALL'S CHANCE WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF CARROLL'S TWO FAMOUS SONS - DANIEL CARROLL OF ROCK CREEK, A SIGNER OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION, AND JOHN CARROLL, THE FIRST BISHOP OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AMERICA.

FOREST GARDEN CLUB OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD.



